1	2	3	4
17.	Orissa	46989	40435
18.	Punjab	12687	12687
19.	Rajasthan	39483	24874
20.	Tamil Nadu	17899	17899
21.	Uttar Pradesh (E)	79792	75965
22.	Uttar Pradesh (W)	23604	21268
23.	Uttaranchal	15610	11630
24.	West Bengal	37910	36932
25.	Sikkim	427	374
26.	Kolkata	437	437
27.	Delhi	191	191
	TOTAL :	607491	513581

Exemption of officers from liability

2561. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether sections 6 and 43 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1893 stipulates exemption to officers from liability of loss, delay, misdelivery and damage;

(b) whether this exemption is absolute and if not, why the officers are not charged with dereliction of duty and deficiency; and

(c) whether Government propose to amend such obnoxious sections which creates hurdles in the efficient administration of the Department and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI S U. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) and (b) The Indian Post Office Act is actually of 1898. Section 6 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, provides that no officer of the Post Office shall incur any liability by reason of any such loss, misdelivery, delay or damage, unless he has caused the same fraudulently or by his wilful act or default. This expemption is not absolute.

Suitable notice including disciplinary action is taken against officials wherever necessary for dereliction of duty and deficiency. Section 43 does not stipulate any exemption.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Closure of M. I. T.

2562. SHRI RAJU PARMAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to close the operations of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and is likely to be replaced by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) for various research projects;

(b) if so, what are the details of termination of MIT in India;

(c) how many research projects were there in hand of MIT at the time of termination of their contract; and

(d) whether MIT was studying low cost rural communication system, world computer, tomorrow's tools and digital village, and if so, what would be the fate of these projects after the termination of their services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) The collaboration between the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA and Media Lab Asia was not continued beyond March 31, 2003.

The Government has decided to continue the Media Lab Asia programme in a restructured form. Various research projects undertaken including those at the five IIT's at Chennai, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Mumbai will continue.

(b) During an internal review taken by the Government it was felt that there need not be an exclusive relationship with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and if a research group in-charge of a project feels that researchers in institution other than MIT can contribute more towards that particular project, he should be free to access that institution.

(c) Nine projects were undertaken through MIT at the time of discontinuation of the Collaboration.

(d) Four research themes identified by Media Lab Asia are given below :

— Bits for all : to provide low cost, high bandwidth wireless connectivity.